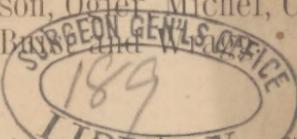


Medical Soc. of South Carolina

PROF. ELI GEDDINGS.

THE TRIBUTE OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY TO HIS MEMORY.

Addresses of Messrs. Parker, Robertson, Ogier, Michel, Carrere, Kinloch, Brodie, Porcher, 

A special meeting of the Medical Society of South Carolina was held in the lecture room of the Medical College, in Charleston, S. C., at noon, on Tuesday, October 22, 1878, for the purpose of paying a suitable tribute of respect to the memory of their late fellow member, Prof. Eli Geddings. The meeting was largely attended by the members of the Society, the members of the medical profession generally, and by the students of the College.

Dr. F. L. Parker, the president of the Society, presided over the meeting, and after stating briefly its object delivered a glowing eulogy upon the deceased, as follows:

REMARKS OF PROF. F. L. PARKER, M. D.,
Gentlemen of the Medical Society of South Carolina: It is my sad duty to communicate to the Society that death has again invaded our ranks, and has deprived us of one of our oldest, and our "most distinguished member."

One whom we all loved and delighted to honor, one whose profound interest in all that related to this Society, whether of a scientific or a social character, we have so fully and so often realized; and one whose manly form, intellectual face and cultivated tastes have been so long familiar to us as a landmark in the medical profession—never to be forgotten—is no more.

I have convened the Society in order to announce officially, to the members, the death of Professor Eli Geddings, M. D. He died at his residence in George street, in this city, on the evening of October the 12th, at the advanced age of nearly 80 years, full of honors and ripe for the sickle.

It is a melancholy satisfaction for us to know and to record the fact, that his illness was a short one, that his death was comparatively painless; and that God, in his mercy, shielded and protected him in his last moments, who had so often soothed with tenderness and alleviated with skill the pangs and sufferings of so many of his fellow mortals on their deathbeds.

As the strong and impressive oak peculiar to our own forests, resisting for years the rude blasts of winter and many storms, sometimes finally yields and falls before the gentle winds of autumn, so he, in the pride and strength of a powerful constitution, after resisting "all the ills that flesh is heir to," for eighty years, finally yielded up his useful and distinguished life in the evening of a mild October's day, almost without pain and without a murmur.

We have borne his remains to their last resting place in Magnolia, as became pupils who honor their "great master."

"After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well."

We are now assembled, gentlemen, to institute the proceedings usual on such occasions, which I feel will be entered into, in this instance, with emotions of peculiar interest, solemnity and respect.

We are here to express our appreciation of the character and attainments of him who for over sixty years has advanced and elevated our calling, to record our obligations to him as our preceptor and teacher, and our love for him as a friend.

For all of us acknowledge his pre-eminent talents and cheerfully accord to him the just and enviable title of having been for years "the recognized head of the profession;" nearly all of us are proud of being his pupils, and are grateful for his wise instructions; and there is scarcely one of us who has not, at one time or another, sought his counsels in professional emergencies, or who has not received at his hands some manifestation of his friendship and regard.

As a further evidence of our respect for his memory, I have called this meeting in the halls of the Medical College, the scene of his early labors and subsequent triumphs in the arena of the lecture room and on the operating table. I have also invited the profession generally, and the medical students of the class of 1878, to unite with us on this occasion—for he belonged to the whole profession—and I feel that in so doing I have your hearty concurrence.

Here I may be permitted to remark that this class is the only one which has assembled at this institution to which he has not lectured either officially or by special invitation, from 1824 to 1878, a period of fifty-four years, except a short interval when absent at the medical school in Baltimore.

Others will refer to his large acquirements in every branch of medicine, to his attainments in the modern languages and in general literature, outside the ordinary fields of professional studies, and to his noble, generous impulses. Of his charities and gratuitous services in every class of society during a long life in which he pursued his arduous professional duties, in storm, in sunshine and in rain, 'tis not for us to speak. These are the works of the good physician, these are recorded in the hearts of his patients and in Heaven.

"Far may we search before we find,
A heart so manly and so kind;
But not around his honored urn
Shall friends alone and kindred mourn:
The thousand eyes his care had dried,
Pour at his name a bitter tide,
And frequent falls the grateful dew
For benefits the world ne'er knew."

The meeting is now ready for the object which has brought us together.

PROF. F. M. ROBERTSON

then delivered the following address and concluded by offering the resolutions which are appended. Dr. Robertson spoke as follows:

Mr. President and Members of the Medical Society of South Carolina—The sad occurrence which has brought us together to-day is one that swells the bosoms of us all with the most solemn and tender emotions. One has been removed from our midst who, for many years, has occupied the foremost place in the front rank of our profession—one whose talents, learning and skill in every branch of the healing art, have elicited the homage, admiration and respect of us all.

Professor Eli Geddings, M. D., the Gamaliel of our profession, in the eightieth year of his age, has been removed, by the hand of death, from the cares, toils and anxieties of a long, distinguished and eventful professional career. It was my good fortune to have enjoyed an intimate professional intercourse with him for half a century, and I can testify to the herculean labors of that career.

With the exception of a few of the earliest years of his professional life, and a short period spent in the City of Baltimore, Charleston has been the field of his labors. From him we have all, with scarcely an exception, been ever eager to draw wise counsels in difficult and obscure cases, as a consulting physician; and at his feet, in the lecture room, we have listened with profound attention to his teachings from the Professorial chair. It becomes, us, then, as we cast a memorial chaplet upon his grave, to speak of him in terms, free from fulsome flattery, but full of admiration for his transcendent abilities, commendation for the zeal and energy manifested in the prosecution of the science

of medicine in all its branches, and our unbounded applause for him as an able, accomplished, and, I had almost said, peerless teacher in the lecture room and at the bedside of the patient. To have attained to this eminence, in spite of the early trials and difficulties with which he was environed, shows a mental power and genius of no ordinary stamp.

To present a proper and faithful biographical sketch of our deceased brother, would require a more extended notice than the present occasion will admit of; and we trust that a committee will be appointed by the Society to prepare a biographical sketch of the professional life of the deceased. This is not only due to his world-wide reputation, but it will be expected and looked for by the hundreds, yea thousands, of pupils that have enjoyed his faithful and able instruction, as well as the entire profession. Professor Geddings truly died in harness, for he attended a meeting of this society, at the regular monthly meeting previous to the last, and on that occasion, entered with manifest earnestness into the discussion of yellow fever, which was then before the society; and, even, within a few days before his death, he attended to professional consultations with patients in his library.

The sad reverses which overtook us all, at the termination of the late war between the States, fell upon our friend and brother with a crushing force which could be ill borne at his advanced age. The fruits of years of toilsome practice were swept away in a moment before his eyes, and he felt that the buoyancy of youth and the vigor of manhood with which a few years would have enabled him to regain all that had been lost were gone forever. He keenly realized the declaration of the sacred writer, that "the days of our years are three score years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be four score years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away;" and he often with deep emotion expressed a desire to depart and be at rest.

With these brief remarks, Mr. President, I beg leave to offer the following resolutions for the consideration of the Society:

1. *Resolved*, That we feel deeply the void which has been left in the ranks of our Society by the death of Prof. Eli Geddings, M. D.

2. *Resolved*, That in the death of Prof. Geddings the medical profession has lost one of its brightest ornaments and most learned and distinguished members, and the citizens of Charleston an accomplished, skilful, kind and sympathizing physician, whose time and talents were ever ready at the call of the suffering and afflicted.

3. *Resolved*, That to the members of his family we tender our most heartfelt sympathy and sincere condolence, in this sad hour of their affliction.

4. *Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to prepare a biographical sketch of the pro-

fessional career of Prof. Geddings, to be submitted to the Society at a future meeting.

5. *Resolved*, That a copy of the above minutes and resolutions be signed by the president and secretary and sent to the family of the deceased.

6. *Resolved*, That a blank page be set apart in the records of the society, on which the name and date of the death of Professor Geddings shall be inscribed.

These resolutions were seconded by Dr. T. L. Ogier in the following remarks:

ADDRESS OF DR. T. L. OGIER.

Gentlemen of the Medical Society—It is no ordinary occasion which calls us together today. The oldest member of this society, one who has been engaged in the arduous and laborious duties of our profession for more than half a century, has passed away. A few of us have had the privilege of listening to his instructive lectures in the early part of his career. Many of us were not then born, but the few of us who were his pupils before his connection with the Medical College, when he lectured and dissected in the old building in Queen street, will always remember his beautiful illustrations of the then new discoveries and doctrines of the great Bichat and Broussais, and also his dissections and demonstrations of surgical anatomy. He had the most devoted love for his profession and the faculty of imparting his enthusiasm to his students, and some of us can date their first love for their profession to these forcible and scientific expositions of its doctrines. From this early date to the time of his death (a period of about fifty-five years) he was engaged in the active duties of his profession, and until the last few years lecturing on medicine and surgery.

But it is impossible to do justice to his various scientific attainments in these remarks. I only name them to show that a truly great man in the profession has rested from his labors and gone to meet his God. May he receive that reward, more than all earthly honors to be desired, of "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make you ruler over many." In the commencement of his public career I had the honor of being his pupil, and in his long professional life his companion and friend. In losing him the brightest light of our profession is extinguished. I have lost the honored preceptor of my youth and the dear friend and companion of maturer years. I leave the details of his great character to be made by others more competent.

DR. MIDDLETON MICHEL

then made the following remarks:

Mr. President: The mournful occurrence which convenes us together admonishes us that Death has come again into our midst to claim his due, though he deprives us on this occasion of all that was strong, and useful, and worthy of professional emulation. Our distinguished Geddings has passed away; he has gone from us "into the far eternal silence of unreturning time." With his professional

brethren, to all of whom so well known, he will yet live long in their memories, since his name must ever be found indefectably inscribed upon the rolls of honorable renown. With a frame as tenacious and vigorous as the intellect was strong and brilliant which animated it, he was permitted to extend his remarkable career of usefulness to nearly four score years.

A classical education, an enthusiastic and undivided devotion to the science of his adoption, the self-acquisition of several of the modern languages, consorted with that colossal memory, always the conspicuous allotment of superior intellects, must have early predicted the eminent rank he was destined to attain; while a sagacious appreciation even in those early days of the only true and philosophical basis upon which scientific medicine and surgery rest—anatomy, physiology and pathology—to which he was entirely devoted for years, gave to his opinions that sway of almost oracular authority, and made them as precise and incisive in their characters as they were imposing in the point or condensation of their delivery.

Added to genius in his calling, the deceased exhibited those physical and mental characteristics which mark surety of success—self-reliance, indomitable perseverance, obstinate resistance of discouragement, which were all expressed in the intellectual eye, the compressed lips, the prominent chin and aquiline nose,

"The eagle's beak between the eyes,
That never knew a conqueror."

It is the "will to do" and determination to succeed that has wrought everything really useful and conducive to solid fame.

The early history of Prof. Geddings, to which we have heard him himself allude with a feeling akin to pride, is but another instance of pre-eminence sinking its roots in deep obscurity. Born in Newberry, his youth was spent in farming, and he has been heard to say that he once drove a wagon to Charleston laden with cotton, and negotiated its sale in this city.

Those who contemplate with interest the sublime possibilities of genius, and love the memory of our friend as I do, may still see near Chappel's Depot, in the mound, and hearthstone, and walls, that remain, the vestiges of that little monument of humble life where our colleague first drew breath; and they may pause at the lesson inculcated, and meditate upon the full fruition of success that waits upon honesty of purpose and inflexible resolve.

This remarkable place will ever be the boast of Newberry as the point of historic record and pride to our profession. Nature seems to have commemorated the event, and to have perpetuated the remembrance of all the solid worth and life-long usefulness which was to emanate from this unpretending spot, in eight white oaks standing near by, which, a friend tells me, are the largest he has ever seen, interlocking their immense limbs, sec-

tions through whose trunks would reveal concentric records of more than a hundred years.

Removing to Abbeville, he here received his classical education at Baker's school, and numbers among his early associates and intimate friends engaged in these initiatory studies the late Governor Pickens. He subsequently read medicine in the office of Drs. Miller and Arnold, of Abbeville, about the years 1819-1820, attending lectures in the Medical College of this city, where he soon was recognized as foremost among his classmates, and was the first, I believe, who presented for graduation, his medical thesis being upon the circulation of the blood, which was ordered to be published, and is in print in the *Carolina Journal of Medicine and Science*, then published in our city.

But we cannot pursue our inquiry now, in accompanying him through his professional advancement, since the simple enumeration of his surgical performances, the recital of his literary works as founder and editor of the "North American Archives," a commentary upon his academic prelections in the various professional chairs he has filled, and an attempt to portray that elocutionary readiness which was ever at command, would trespass far beyond the time I have allotted to these remarks.

The independent self-reliance which marked his course through life seems to have accompanied him to its close; reluctant to call for aid but upon himself, he was not willing to encroach upon his colleagues, even so far as to apprise them of his illness, for he knew how ready they would have been to flock around him in their ministrations of help and comfort; but retiring to suffer *incognito*, like a monarch from our midst, he lays his sceptre down and wraps his mantle about him to be at rest, reminding us of the beautiful lines of the poetess :

"Life we have been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part where friends are dear,
Perhaps t'will cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choice thine own time, say not good night,
But in some bright clime bid me good morning."

Dr. Michel was followed by

DR. M. E. CARRERE,

who spoke as follows :

Mr. President and Members of the Medical Profession—This meeting has been convened for no common or ordinary purpose, but pregnant with solemnity and deep solicitude. We have assembled here as a band of brothers in social conclave, in behalf of the departed worth, to give impulse and expression to our feelings. A light has gone out in our midst. A brilliant star has been extinguished. The harbinger of death came and reaped from the midst of us, with his sickle, talent, virtue and benevolence. Dr. Geddings was a man of no ordinary stamp, possessing a mind of high culture and refinement, and when in the meridian of his professional career he ran parallel with and vied with the great lights of

Europe and America. Few were his equal, none his superior. In his practice he scrupulously observed all the cardinal points of etiquette, and was a strong adherent to the Code of Ethics, and, when engaged professionally with his brother practitioner, always exhibited fraternal liberality towards him. Dr. Geddings was a man highly endowed with clinical knowledge, and therefore generally formed a correct diagnosis of such cases brought under his supervision and treatment. This made him very successful in practice.

In surgery he wielded the scalpel with *Æsculapian* skill, his motto on the face of which was, "I wound to heal." This point he generally carried out to the letter with triumphant success. Dr. Geddings was a friend to the widow and orphan, and when fortune smiled on him rendered pecuniary aid to the poor, coupled with his professional services, and when suffering humanity was presented to his view he made *nulla distinctione* between the rich and the poor, but gave his professional services alike to both. My friends, Dr. Eli Geddings is not *dead* but still *liveth*; he *will never die*, but *live embalmed in memory* in the hearts of his medical brethren and in the hearts of scientific practitioners and surgeons. He, like Enoch, is translated from earth to the realms of eternal bliss, a shining diadem in the coronet of just men made perfect. These very few remarks, my friends, are but but a faint outline of the great surgeon. They are the expression of every heart on this occasion.

PROF. R. A. KINLOCH, M. D., then made the following remarks. Dr. Kinloch said :

Mr. President—I have listened with infinite satisfaction to the worthy tributes of respect and admiration which have been so happily presented by my seniors in the profession. I, sir, must ever feel gratified when I listen to a tribute to true worth. And if ever there was an occasion when a subject was worthy of the remarks made, that occasion I now recognize. It may be considered superfluous for me to add anything to what has been said, but I would be doing violence to my nature, and to the feelings of my heart, were I not to offer my mite in testimony of the high appreciation in which our deceased brother was held.

It has been deemed, by so called "practical men," a useless task to eulogise the dead. I confess to that kind of sentiment, however, which clings to the privilege of perpetuating the memory of departed friends, of recounting and holding up of their virtues, of trying so to assimilate myself with the memory of their good deeds as to profit by their example. It would be farthest from my intent to overdraw a picture of their greatness, or to hold up for admiration virtues which had no existence. In all that I would say of the dead, as of the living, my disposition and my effort would be to speak clearly and truthfully.

In referring to the character of our de-

parted friend, there is to me a sweet pleasure in its just and truthful estimate. Dr. Eli Geddings is no more! He is removed from the petty jealousies, the unworthy suspicions and the unjust criminations that come to most of us during our period of attrition with the world. His worst enemy will find it difficult to detract from his sterling qualities, to disparage his good deeds, or to obscure the effulgence of his varied talents. A great man, a true man, a useful citizen, a skilled and good physician is no more! Ours the loss; his, I trust, the gain! His life was in many respects a struggle; it was checkered with good and evil fortune, and it can scarcely be said to have reached, in all respects, its merited reward. Its most characteristic feature, perhaps, was the triumph of professional effort, unless we except its wide usefulness. Upon this latter feature I ought scarcely to comment. Its proper recognition is with the people, among whom he lived out his more than "three-score years and ten." And yet, my friends, our streets and public places are not clad in mourning; we hear no boomerang of cannon, no tolling of bells, no gathering of the masses, no pulpit orations, no fulminations of eloquence from the halls of legislation or the chambers of justice, no provision for his loved ones. With the death of a successful warrior, a second-rate statesman, or a conspicuous politician, arrangements for these things would be ample.

And yet who amongst us would desire to have upon this occasion a different exhibition of feeling? I answer for our departed brother, that he would rather have it as it is. He lived, in spite of misfortunes, and independent of public applause, cheered and elevated by his zeal in a noble work; he died with the full consciousness of a duty performed to his fellow men, and to his loved profession. To-day, in the mansions of the rich and the humble dwellings of the poor, his memory is warmly cherished, and his name thrice blessed. For time to come the mention of his good deeds, and the recollection of his kindly sympathy, will be a potent influence with the family circle. In many a nursery there is yet to drop a mother's silent tear at the reality of his absence; as in many a chamber, during the profundity of night, there has heretofore gone forth a wife's most grateful prayer for his eternal welfare. Better this than the pageant train, the shouts of the multitude, the triumphal arch, or the regal tomb.

But it would seem more pertinent to the occasion of our assembling here to-day to speak of our departed brother as he lived in his relation with the profession. He has been the physician of note in this section for nearly half a century, and, during most of this time, the recognized head of the profession. In the earlier and middle portion of his career he had to cope with more than one colleague of great professional ability, and possessing a wider influence for promotion. With these he early held his own, and when he had reached the

fullness of his development he stood avowedly "the noblest Roman of them all." The impress of his talent and his professional devotion has been fixed upon Southern medicine. Earning a reputation first as a lecturer upon anatomy and several of the cognate branches of medicine, he added to this by his ability as a writer, and in due time he achieved success as a practitioner of medicine and surgery. His strength consisted in the excellency of his attainments in the several departments of medicine, surgery and obstetrics. He eschewed specialism, for with us it was then almost synonymous with charlatany. In his efforts as a lecturer and teacher it was a matter simply of opinion whether he succeeded best with medicine or surgery. His erudition in medical literature was unsurpassed in this country, and his practical acumen was such as to cause him to be constantly selected for consultation.

This wide success was not owing altogether to the force of intellect or natural genius. Most of it came of arduous toil and indomitable will. In some respects his mind and temperament were not well adapted to his calling. While the memory was remarkable, the logical element was not of the first order, and the temperament was too actively nervous. The more surprising then, and the more creditable his success. He certainly was not born a surgeon. Years ago he remarked to me that he was never constituted for the practice of surgery, but that he had followed it as a necessity. And yet during the earlier part of his career how wonderful were his achievements as a surgical teacher and operator. He did, however, possess certain great elements for success in surgery, though he lacked others. He had the quick discerning eye, the courage, and the will that bore him triumphantly on in many a desperate struggle. While the hand trembled, the eye flashed; and whether the scalpel or the amputating knife, it was urged home and did successful work.

In his intercourse with his professional brethren of all ages and standing, Dr. Geddings was ever courteous, and kind, and fair. To the youngest of them he was unassuming, social and friendly, never obtrusive with his superior knowledge, but always willing to afford the benefit of his wise counsel. In all ethical relations he was consistent and true. Possessing more of the *fortiter in re* than the *suaviter in modo*, he was not constituted for securing friendships, yet he made but few enemies in the profession, while he commanded the respect and esteem of all who learned to know him.

It is not the least pleasing portion of my duty here, to confess my individual obligations to him in his capacity as teacher, counsellor and friend. It is easy to call to mind important facts and principles I first obtained at his lips. The influence of the professional enthusiasm which he so constantly exhibited, has often worked for my good. The recollections of his struggles and his triumphs over

serious difficulties has, in time of need, been most effective stimulus.

He is gone! I can yield to none of you, my friends, in the sad regret felt at his loss. I trust that God will raise up some one of you to fill his place. While but few of us can ever hope to reach the excellence of his greatness, I may indulge the fervent hope that, when our work is done, we will pass away with the consciousness of having tried, in our time, as he did, to elevate our noble calling, and to leave behind the record of a useful life.

Dr. R. L. Brodie then made the following address:

REMARKS OF DR. BRODIE.

Mr. President—Seven years ago just such a gathering of the medical profession of Charleston assembled to do homage to deceased greatness and goodness, when Dr. John Edwards Holbrook died, the grand old teacher and author had laid down his scalpel and pen, and we realized that a great scientific light had gone out. To-day we meet around the new-made grave of his friend and compeer to give expression to our grief that we shall see his face no more. Dr. Eli Geddings rests from his labors.

He was a stalwart traveller on life's highway, who had succored many on the journey; but as the shadows of evening lengthened on his pathway, and he was so weary with the toil of the road, that he lay down to an everlasting repose. He was a busy searcher after truth, who, for more than half a century, had sought to evolve, by the light of a great science, the mysteries of "Life and the Resurrection of Life;" but at last he paused for a moment on the threshold of the unknown, and then passed within the portal into the full blaze of the Beautiful and the True. Ours be the loss, his the gain; ours the unrest, his the rest. To many of us Dr. Geddings was known for years as the able but stern unapproachable teacher. He was the Gamaliel at whose feet we sat and learned. Between the professor's chair and the student's bench there was, in that day, a distance well defined and well observed. We listened and wondered at the versatility and genius which would one day demonstrate the minute anatomy of the eye, on another would extemporize on meningitis, and on a third would extirpate the upper maxillary bone. More than mortal he seemed to our gaze. But time and distance had left their traces upon both of us, and we were again brought into new relations with each other. During a professional attendance on a beautiful boy, in whom I was much interested, I felt the need of counsel, and sought it of our deceased friend. It was evident that the patient was fast passing beyond the reach of human aid. When we had retired for consultation he laid his hand upon my shoulder, and with a voice choked with emotion, he said: "I wish I could help you; I know just how you feel over this case." It was a new revelation of the man, unexpected and startling. 'Twas "the" touch of nature that makes the world akin." The

sympathy of a moment dispelled the illusion of years, and a great heart glorified a great intellect.

Years later Dr. Geddings was my confrere as a member of the board of health. An earnest desire for the public weal and a devotion to the interests of those to so many of whom he stood in the relation of medical attendant, always characterized him. But the impossibility of accomplishing any good while occupying a mere advisory position, and the utter loathing which possessed his honest soul at the spectacle of abuse of trust and power in others, led to his retirement to private life.

I have dwelt thus, Mr. President, upon the moral qualities of the deceased rather than upon his intellectual traits. We know that popular applause is seldom the lot of the physician. The voice of the multitude is never heard in the sick chamber, or it becomes a whisper in the presence of suffering and death. But it is in the sacred confines of home that the conscientious physician finds his greatness and reward. If "to live in hearts we leave behind is not to die," surely our deceased friend erected for himself many a temple in which "his memory now lies entombed, and many a warm tear will refresh and embalm it" forever.

"Rest thee then softly in thy narrow dwelling
Thou noble heart,
And tho' our bosoms may with grief be swolling,
Let no tear start.
It were in vain, for Time had long been kneeling,
Great one, depart."

We lay this simple tribute on his tomb. Those who knew him better may do more; none who honored him as much can do less.

PROF. F. PEYRE PORCHER, M. D., followed Dr. Brodie with the following remarks:

We would esteem it a privilege, Mr. President, if permitted before this society to pay a tribute, however feeble and inadequate it may be, to the member who has recently passed from our midst, laden with years, crowned with honors, and mourned by an entire city. We doubt much if before, in the history of Charleston, a man has left our ranks with regard to whom there was more unanimity in the opinion of his worth, talents, industry, accomplishments and capacity. Endowed with a very high order of mind, ambitious from his youth of acquiring knowledge, bold, enterprising and self-reliant by disposition, and desirous of fitting himself for the attainment of the highest honors of his profession, he has perfectly succeeded. His record has indeed been a brilliant one, for he has identified his name with the principal achievements of the profession of his native State in every department of its practice for the past fifty years. There was nothing in surgery, in medicine, in obstetrics that the best of his compeers here and elsewhere could do that he did not perform equally well; and it is not saying too much to affirm that in every gathering of our profession in this State he was the recognized leader, and every one

willingly invited his counsel and listened with deference to his opinions. Latterly and for many years past he has been literally, both in years and fame, the Nestor of the profession.

Dr. Geddings never ceased from study to the latest days of his life. Even after the war he supplied himself with most of the new publications, and his collection of books, ancient and modern, was always by far the rarest and the richest in this city. He was a strict constructionist with regard to the necessity of maintaining a high standard of medical education. His elaborate paper presented to the American Medical Association is a proof of this.

It is needless to refer to the moral and ethical traits of his character; for in his professional bearing and conduct, and in all the relations of life, he kept his honor stainless. He was justly proud of this, and we all remember how he was accustomed in our social gatherings (of which he was a leading spirit) to tell us that no one could point to a delinquency of his. Ever gentle and tender to a brother in trouble, with his strong arms and broad shoulders he was always ready to lift others out of the difficulties into which they had fallen, and to shield and protect them by the weight of his name and character. During so long a career of daily intercourse with families afflicted whether by sickness or domestic trouble, there is no possibility of estimating the good that such a man has done in his day and generation—the timely aid he has given to his brother practitioners, the cares he has removed, the sufferings he has assuaged, the hopes he has imparted; substituting relief, comfort, health and happiness.

We must be pardoned on this occasion only for one word personal to ourselves. We cannot refrain from stating that it was our good fortune to succeed him in the chair of clinical medicine in the Medical College of the State of South Carolina. We could scarcely hope even to imitate so great a teacher, yet the honor of occupying the same position—in which he lead *longo intervallo*—was an exceeding high one. But we must not occupy too much of the attention of this society, where others may desire to offer their meed of praise to our deceased brother.

DR. J. S. BUIST

then spoke as follows :

Mr. President—I hope I may be allowed the privilege of trespassing upon your time to pay my brief and humble tribute to the memory of one who from my childhood and upwards I have always been taught to revere and respect as a father in the profession, and a Nestor among his peers. Situated as I am so far in years from the active period in the brilliant career of the late Dr. Geddings, it would ill become me to enter into any eulogy as to his distinguished life and character. This has already been done by those far more able and familiar with his life and times; but intimately associated as I have been with him in the last decade, the strong and sterling traits of character, com-

bined with great genius and attainment, as exhibited then, only convinced me that he was ever worthy of the distinguished reputation he enjoyed, and that made him not only an ornament in his profession, but the pride of the community in which he lived. Combined with great learning as we are all well aware, there was eminently that practical turn of mind which made him grasp the situation as it was, and improve every opportunity that presented itself without selfish motive, and to the general good of his fellow citizens.

When from the chaos and wreck of the late war we all returned to our homes anxious to lay the foundations of our new medical careers, none felt more deeply than he the altered and changed relations existing in the charitable distributions of our calling; none lent more cheerfully and cordially his best energies and matured wisdom and judgment to the remedying of the existing evils, and as soon as time and opportunity presented he laid the foundations through his influence of the development of our public charities, which will always stand as a monument to his interest in the cause of medical education and the relief of suffering humanity. We may safely say that it was to his great efforts and controlling influence that our community is indebted for the large and commodious institutions which daily contribute to the relief of hundreds of the poor and destitute.

With no selfish aims or purposes to serve, with malice toward none and charity to all, his highest ambition seemed to advance the standard of his profession, and benefit mankind in his day and generation. Always willing and ready to respond to the calls of charity, he took particular delight in the exercise of those high gifts with which Nature had endowed him, and none shone more brightly when in contact with such distress and suffering.

It has been said that—

“The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones.”

But this was Pagan philosophy, unenlightened by the benignant reign of Christian charity and civilization.

If from any act of Dr. Geddings evil may have resulted, that evil will soon be forgotten, merged as it has been in the noble life of usefulness he spent, and the brilliant example he has left us.

DR. W. T. WRAGG

then closed the speaking with the following remarks :

Mr. President—I desire to say a few words on this occasion, so full of interest to all of us, who are members of this society, but most especially to those who like myself are fast passing to the “bourne from which no traveler returns.”

My recollections of Prof. Geddings go back to the time when, as a youth, I first became acquainted with the movement set on foot for establishing the Medical College of South

Carolina. In 1824 the efforts, sustained under the greatest difficulties, for founding a medical college were brought to a successful termination. Moultrie, Holbrook, Dickson, Ramsay, Prioleau, Frost and Ravenel, all young in years, and all unknown to fame, having raised money for the erection of a fine building, by pledging all that they had, and, I may well add, all they hoped to acquire, stood up, in the new and untried places and by the force of self-reliance, launched into mature existence an institution destined to make their names known through all this wide land.

Then and there, as the first fruits of their labors appeared for the first time, in our view, young Geddings emerging from the teachings of these youthful masters, with a promise of eminence and usefulness, which, though at first only recognized by his teachers, was soon discovered by others, and in rapid progress to greater maturity, he attained a place which fixed him in the admiration of all—a place which he continued to occupy and adorn for more than fifty years.

These men are now all gone, and all that remains of them is the memorial they have left of themselves in the institution which they founded and sustained so well. Geddings in time had become one of them, and, like them, he has left his name engraven on that monument. The history of the Medical College of South Carolina cannot be written without naming the name of Geddings.

This is not the time, nor is this the place, to enter on a biography of Dr. Geddings. What has been so well said already will doubtless be supplemented by fuller details of a life so fruitful in lessons for the aspirants to professional usefulness. But I may, in a few words, touch upon one or two of the traits of character which distinguished our deceased colleague and marked him as one of rare mental and social endowments.

The first of his excellencies to which I will refer was his wonderful memory. To read, with Geddings, was to memorize, and to memorize was to engrave upon the brain marks which were never to be obliterated—“*vere perennius*.” With such an endowment reading was not only a pleasure, (as it is to most cultivated minds,) but a profit. It was garnering up, by the easiest and pleasantest of all processes, stores which ordinary minds acquire only by long, patient and irksome toil. What Geddings learned he never forgot. And, best of all, these abundant stores were so admirably arranged that all and every article was as readily at his command as if they had been recorded only the day before. But these admirable and enticing qualities of mind, while supplying him with an endless source of personal gratification, tended, perhaps, to detract from his social excellencies. Accordingly we find that he rather shunned than courted society. Thus it was that he was not

often seen at the meetings of the “club,” which, in its day, gathered the élite of the community at its stated evening meetings. I well remember at one of these meetings, where Geddings’s absence was commented on, hearing Dickson say that it was a source of great regret that one so admirably calculated to bring instruction as well as pleasure with him should so shade his radiant light from the eyes of admiring and appreciating friends.

But if Geddings was backward in contributing from his fund of information on formal occasions like those to which I have alluded, such was not the case in his personal intercourse. I knew no man in all my lifelong intercourse whose conversation and information was more at the command of his friends. A casual meeting at a book store or at a street corner would furnish an occasion for drawing him into conversations overflowing with information and amusement. There was an arch smile around the mouth and a gay twinkle in his eye that showed how much his heart and soul were in the words that fell from his lips.

It was my good fortune to coincide with Prof. Geddings on many points closely connected with the hygienic requirements of our city, and with the equally important but still more abstruse questions of epidemic and endemic influence, and our conversations on these matters invariably left upon my memory impressions of real practical value.

There is but one other characteristic to which I will allude before closing these hurried remarks. It is this: In no place or time could the young men of our profession find a kinder or more sympathizing friend, one more ready to extend the helping hand or say the encouraging word. Geddings was the friend of the young; and, while he sat upon the topmost round of professional fame, his arm could reach and help the humblest beginner. Honor to his name. May the peace of God rest upon him.

At the conclusion of Dr. Wragg’s remarks the resolutions were voted upon and were adopted unanimously, and Dr. Parker appointed Drs. Robertson, T. L. Ogier and J. P. Chazal on the committee, in accordance with the provisions of the fourth resolution.

Dr. Carrere then offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That, with the consent of the president and members of the Medical Society, a portrait of the late Prof. Eli Geddings, M. D., be painted, and that the same be placed in the hall of the society, and that the members of the said society be allowed the privilege of contributing towards defraying the expenses incidental to the carrying out of this resolution.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.